

REMARKS

This Response is being filed within the statutory period for reply, which is scheduled to end on December 21, 2006.

Claims 1-22 are currently pending in this application. By this amendment claims 1 and 14 have been canceled, and each of claims 2, 7-12, 15 and 18-19 have been amended.

The Examiner has objected to claim 11 on informal grounds, and has indicated that the omitted term "one" should be inserted following the term "at least." Applicants have made such an amendment to fully overcome the Examiner's objection.

The Examiner has rejected various claims on the following grounds:

- (a) rejection of claims 1, 7, 9-10, 14 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,641,525 to Rocheleau et al. ("Rocheleau");
- (b) rejection of claims 8, 11 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rocheleau; and
- (c) rejection of claims 1, 7-8 and 10-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,024,690 to Lee et al. ("Lee") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,725,081 to Ciezki ("Ciezki").

The Examiner has also indicated that claims 2-6, 13 and 15-17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and that claims 20-22 are allowable.

Although applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejections, in order to move this case quickly to issue, applicants have canceled original independent claims 1 and 14, and have amended dependent claims 2 and 15 to be in independent form and to include all limitations set forth in original claims 1 and 14 from which they depend respectively. In view of the Examiner's indication of allowability of original claims 2 and 15 (and the amendments made herein), applicants believe that, as amended, each of these claims are in condition for allowance. Further, each of remaining claims 3-13 and 16-19, either originally were, or have been amended to be, dependent on claim 2 or 15. As each of claims 2 and 15, as amended, are deemed

allowable, applicants believe that dependent claims 3-13 and 16-19 are also in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments, which applicants believe fully overcome all rejections in this case, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims.

Although no fee is believed to be due in connection with this Amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit Account No. 10-0750/GYN-5013/MJS.

Should any minor points remain prior to issuance of a Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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